

Message Text

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FM USLO PEKING

TO AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 827

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CH

SUBJECT: PARTY CONGRESS REPORTING

1. AS PREPARATIONS FOR THE PARTY CONGRESS PROCEED, USLO WOULD LIKE TO WORK OUT WITH THE CONGEN A RATIONAL DIVISION OF LABOR ON THE REPORTING OF THIS ELUSIVE EVENT. WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO START AN INTERCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE CONGRESS, AND TO START THINGS OFF HAVE PROVIDED A BRIEF AND INFORMAL RUNDOWN OF WHAT WE EXPECT MIGHT OCCUR.

2. DIVISION OF LABOR. WE BELIEVE CONGEN, AS HAS NORMALLY BEEN THE CASE, SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR BASIC BIOGRAPHIC AND DOCUMENTARY CONTENT ANALYSIS. USLO LACKS THE FILES, MANPOWER AND CONTINUITY FOR THESE VITAL TASKS. USLO WILL REPORT ON-THE-SPOT OBSERVATIONS, ATMOSPHERICS, AND COMMENTARY ON EVENTS BY PEKING SOURCES. IF WE OBTAIN DOCUMENTARY OR MEDIA ITEMS IN PEKING THAT ARE NOT READILY AVAILABLE IN HONG KONG, WE WILL REPORT THEM WITH WHATEVER FAST ANALYSES WE CAN ADD. AT THE END WE MAY ALSO WANT TO MAKE SOME BROAD SUMMARY COMMENTS ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EVENTS AS SEEN FROM HERE.

3. EXPECTATIONS. THE CONGRESS STILL APPEARS VERY MUCH
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ON, ALTHOUGH THE PREPARATORY STAGE IS TAKING LONGER

THAN EXPECTED. ALL SIGNS POINT TO A MEETING -- THE LIMOUSINES IN FRONT OF THE GREAT HALL WHERE THE LIGHTS HAVE BURNED LATE EVERY NIGHT SINCE THE END OF JULY; THE STATEMENTS OF CHINESE DIPLOMATS ABROAD; THE POSTPONEMENTS OF MOST FOREIGN DELEGATIONS VISITS; THE LACK OF LARGE-SCALE LEADERSHIP TURNOUTS; REPORTS THAT CONGRESS DELEGATES HAVE BEEN PICKED. ALL OTHER EVIDENCE ASIDE, IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE THAT A RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL LIKE MFA INFORMATIONAL DEPARTMENT CHIEF P'ENG HUA WOULD TELL FOREIGN NEWSMEN AS HE DID LAST WEEK THAT A CONGRESS WAS GOING TO OCCUR IF IT WAS NOT.

4. NO ONE CAN SAY EXACTLY WHY IT IS TAKING THE CONGRESS SO LONG TO JELL. WE WOULD SPECULATE THAT DIFFICULT DOMESTIC ISSUES ARE THE ROOT REASONS-- HOW TO CAST THE DEFINITIVE POLITICAL DISPOSAL OF LIN PIAO AND CHEN PO-TA; WHO TO PLACE ON THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND THE POLITBURO; HOW TO HANDLE EDUCATIONAL REFORM, ECONOMIC PRIORITIES, SCIENTIFIC ASSISTANCE, TRADE, YOUTH IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, CULTURE AND A HOST OF OTHER CONTROVERSIAL QUESTIONS. IN 1969, THE RADICALS WERE IN CHARGE, WITH THE MODERATE ELEMENTS OF THE LEADERSHIP MAKING THEIR INFLUENCE FELT BY SNIPING AT RADICAL POSITIONS, OBFUSCATING ISSUES AND BLOCKING THE POLICY MAKING PROCESS. THE ROLES ARE REVERSED IN 1973. THE MODERATES ARE RUNNING THE SHOW, BUT THE RADICALS ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO MAKE THEMSELVES HEARD. AS THE CONGEN HAS REPORTED, THE PRESS IS FULL OF EVIDENCE THAT DEBATES ARE IN PROGRESS. WE ARE NOT SURE WE WOULD DESCRIBE THE PROCESS PRECISELY AS CHOU EN-LAI "BACKPEDALLING" HIS WAY INTO THE CONGRESS (HONG KONG 8196), BUT WE AGREE THAT HE WILL NEED TO COMPROMISE TO SOME EXTENT (BUT PROBABLY NOT ON BASIC POLICY ISSUES) IN ORDER TO GET THE MEETING OFF THE GROUND. IF, HOWEVER, HE FEELS HE IS UNDER PRESSURE TO COMPROMISE TOO MUCH, WE THINK HE HAS THE POWER TO POSTPONE IT INDEFINITELY.

5. POSSIBLE RESULTS. WE EXPECT THAT THE CONGRESS WILL CONCENTRATE ON BRINGING THE CASES OF CHEN PO-TA AND LIN PIAO TO A FORMAL CONCLUSION IN A WAY THAT CURRENT LEADERS WHO WORKED CLOSELY WITH BOTH CAN ACCEPT. AN ANCILLARY EVENT, WE HAVE HEARD, WILL BE THE CREATION

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OF A NEW REVOLUTIONARY MARTYR, THE AIR FORCE OFFICER IN CHARGE OF LIN PIAO'S CRASHED TRIDENT. A NEW CONSTITUTION WILL NEED TO EMERGE, WITH LIN REMOVED AS MAO'S STATED SUCCESSOR. WE DOUBT THAT ANYONE WILL HAVE THE TEMERITY OR LACK OF SENSE TO ALLOW HIMSELF NAMED AS NUMBER TWO. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT A NEW CONSTITUTION WILL BEAR CLOSER RESEMBLANCE TO THE OLD PRE-CULTURAL REVOLUTION DOCUMENT THAN TO THE PROPAGANDA APPEAL THAT EMERGED

FROM THE NINTH CONGRESS.

6. WHILE VALIDITY OF THE WORK REPORT OF THE NINTH CONGRESS IS NOT LIKELY TO BE QUESTIONED, SOME IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES AND DEVELOPMENTS ARE LIKELY TO BE REFLECTED IN ANY TENTH CONGRESS DOCUMENTS.

7. THERE WILL BE ADULATION OF MAO, BUT THE TONE WILL BE LESS STRIDENT. THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY WILL BE PRAISED BUT NO LONGER DESCRIBED AS THE SOLE "MIGHTY PILLAR OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT." THE ENHANCED IMPORTANCE OF WORKERS IN THE BODY POLITIC THROUGH THE RESUCITATED LABOR UNIONS AND AS NEW PARTY MEMBERS WILL PROBABLY BE EMPHASIZED. THE RECONSTITUTED YOUTH AND WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS WILL ALSO GET A FURTHER PUSH.

8. ANY COMMENTARY ON CHINA'S RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES WILL SURELY SINGLE OUT THE SOVIETS AS THE PRINCIPAL ENEMY, PUFF CHINA'S ENHANCED WORLD STATURE AND JUSTIFY THE NEW FLEXIBILITY IN RELATIONSHIPS WITH A WIDE RANGE OF ENEMIES. THE UNITED STATES WILL BE IN FOR SOME CRITICISM. THE POSITIONS OF OUR OPPONENTS IN INDO-CHINA WILL BE SUPPORTED, THOUGH WE EXPECT NO MAJOR DIRECT ATTACK ON THIS FRONT. EMPHASIS ON SOVIET SINS AND AGGRESSIVE DESIGNS WILL LEAVE US IN A MORE COMFORTABLE POSITION THAN BEFORE, AND REFLECT BY INFERENCE THE IMPROVEMENT IN OUR RELATIONS. IN GENERAL, WE EXPECT DOCUMENTARY TREATMENT OF DOMESTIC POLITICAL ISSUES TO BE COUCHED IN TERMS OF GENERAL GOALS WHILE ALLOWING FOR MANY OF THE DIFFERENCES NOTED BY CONGEN AND OTHERS TO CONTINUE AS THE PROBLEMS OF PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION ARE WORKED OUT. THE IDEALS OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION
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WILL RECEIVE FULL PLAY, WITHOUT MUCH CONCRETE GUIDANCE AS TO HOW THEY SHOULD BE CARRIED THROUGH.

9. ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES OF THE CONGRESS WILL BE TO CONFIRM A NEW LEADERSHIP LINEUP, PROVIDING HIGH LEVEL BLESSING FOR A NUMBER OF CONTROVERSIAL REHABILITATIONS, AND EXPANDING SOMEWHAT THE NUMBER OF OFFICIALS TO WHOM AUTHORITY CAN BE DELEGATED FROM THE TOP. THE NEW CENTRAL COMMITTEE WILL REFLECT A LESSENING OF THE PLA'S ROLE IN SOCIETY. PROMINENT NEWCOMERS LIKE SHANGHAI'S WANG HUNG-WEN ARE LIKELY TO RECEIVE RECOGNITION, AS WILL SOME SCARRED OLD WARHORSES LIKE SZECHWAN'S LI CHING-CHUAN.

10. THE FOREGOING INFORMAL SKETCH NEEDS A LOT OF REFIN-

ING AND FILLING OUT. WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONGEN'S
COMMENTS. WE ALSO WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR SUGGESTIONS ON ITEMS
TO WATCH FOR, AND QUESTIONS TO ASK LOCALLY.
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